

MINUTES

MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 57th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE ADMINISTRATION

Call to Order: By **CHAIRMAN SYLVIA BOOKOUT-REINICKE**, on February 5, 2001 at 5:15 P.M., in Room 455 Capitol.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Rep. Sylvia Bookout-Reinicke, Chairman (R)
Rep. Joe Tropila, Vice Chairman (D)
Rep. Norma Bixby (D)
Rep. Edith Clark (R)
Rep. Dave Lewis (R)
Rep. Trudi Schmidt (D)
Rep. David Wanzenried (D)

Members Excused: None.

Rep. Gay Ann Masolo (R)

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Marilyn Miller, Committee Secretary

Please Note: These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

Committee Business Summary:

Hearing(s) & Date(s) Posted:
Executive Action:

Hearing on HB 243

Rep. Dee Brown outlined the bill which would limit the number of bills a legislator could introduce to ten unless each bill in excess of ten includes the repeal of a statute.

Rep. Joe Tropila moved the bill do pass.

Rep. Dave Lewis moved a substitute motion that the bill be amended to clearly define the limit.

Rep. Dave Wanzenried asked about the history of this bill in the legislature. **Rep. Lewis** noted that the bill had passed the House in the 1999 session but died in the Senate.

Rep. Lewis's substitute motion passed by a vote of 4-1 with **Rep. Wanzenried** voting no.

Rep. Tropila moved the bill pass as amended.

Rep. Wanzenried voiced his opinion that the rule set out in this legislation is more clearly the province of the joint rules.

The motion to pass the bill as amended failed on a 4-4 tie vote. **Rep. Wanzenried** made a substitute motion that the bill be tabled, but this motion failed on the reverse 4-4 tie vote.

Hearing on SB 180

Sen. Tom Beck, Senate District #28, outlined the purpose behind this bill which would allow a standing committee of the legislature to meet before a special session to hear and act upon pre-introduced legislation and would allow committee members to be paid for attendance at these meetings.

Sen. Beck said this bill would be used to expedite a special session and that all the standing committees could do would be to recommend to the legislature once they met in a special session; the recommendations could be to pass, do not pass, or table a bill. This would allow committees to meet before a session and make recommendations in order to get the work done before the legislature came to town. It could, he said, eliminate two to three days of a special session while the legislature sits and waits for notice and committee meetings.

Opponents

Don Judge, Montana State AFL-CIO, said this bill is a result of the latest special session. He had contacted legal counsel who said that this law was an unconstitutional use of standing committees to hold hearings prior to the legislature convening. Mr. Judge said he believes the bill violates the constitutional authority of the legislature. He noted an additional problem of adequate notice and public participation.

Rep. Lewis asked **Sen. Beck** what would constitute "act upon" pre-introduced bills. **Sen. Beck** responded that the action would be making a recommendation to the Committee of the Whole once the legislative session began.

Following discussion on the merits of the idea, **Rep. Bookout-Reinicke** asked Lois Menzies of the Legislative Services Division to draft an amendment mandating seven days' notice of committee hearings.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 5:45 P.M.

REP. SYLVIA BOOKOUT-REINICKE, Chairman

MARILYN MILLER, Secretary

SB/MM